LISTING OF THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows.

1 - 30. (Cancelled)

31. (Currently Amended): A method of heating a metal material for subsequent molding comprising the steps of:

introducing the metal material into a vessel having a member located within the vessel;

~~directly heating a member located within the vessel;~~

~~introducing~~ locating the metal material about the member;

heating the metal material by low frequency induction heating with an operating frequency of less than 1000 H_z ~~extracting heat from the member to the metal material~~ to achieve a temperature for molding; ~~and~~

maintaining a temperature gradient of less than 100° C through a wall thickness section of the vessel~~.~~; and

ejecting the metal material from the vessel.

32. (Currently Amended): The method of claim 31 ~~further comprising the step~~ wherein said heating step further comprises the step of at least partially directly heating the metal material.

33. (Currently Amended): The method of claim 31 wherein said ~~directly~~ heating step includes the step of low frequency inductive heating of the vessel.

34. (Currently Amended): The method of claim 31 wherein said ~~directly~~ heating step includes the step of low frequency inductive heating of the member.

35. (Currently Amended): The method of claim 31 wherein said heating ~~the metal material~~ step includes the step of ~~low frequency inductive~~ at least partially indirectly heating of the metal material.

36. (Currently Amended): The method of claim 31 wherein said heating step ~~and said directly heating step include~~ includes the step of low frequency inductive heating of the vessel, the member and the metal material.

37. (Original): The method of claim 31 further comprises the step of heating the metal material to a temperature above its solidus temperature, but not exceeding its liquidus temperature.

38. (Original): The method of claim 31 further comprising the step of stirring the metal material to decrease particle size and increase roundness of said solid phase in the metal material.

39. (Original): The method of claim 31 further comprising the step of heating the metal material to a temperature above its liquidus temperature.

40. (Original): The method of claim 31 further comprising the step of preheating the member and vessel.

41. (Currently Amended): The method of claim 40 wherein said ~~preheating~~ ejecting step includes the step of axially retracting the member within the vessel.

42. (Cancelled)

43. (Original): The method of claim 40 wherein said preheating step includes the step of inductively heating the member.

44. (Original): The method of claim 31 wherein said maintaining step maintains a temperature gradient of less than 50° C through a wall thickness section of the vessel.

45. (Original): The method of claim 31 wherein said maintaining step maintains a temperature gradient of about 25° C through a wall thickness section of the vessel.

46. (New): The method of claim 31 wherein the heating step includes the step of extracting heat from the member to heat the metal material.

47. (New): A method of heating a metal material for subsequent molding comprising the steps of:

introducing the metal material into a vessel having a member located within the vessel;

locating the metal material about the member;

heating the metal material by low frequency induction heating with an operating frequency of less than 1000 H_z to achieve a temperature for molding; and

ejecting the metal material from the vessel.

48. (New): The method of claim 47 further comprising the step of maintaining a temperature gradient of less than 100° C through the thickness of a wall section of the vessel.

49. (New): The method of claim 47 wherein said ejecting step ejects the material out of the vessel under pressure.

50. (New): The method of claim 47 wherein said ejecting step includes the step of retracting the member and advancing the member to eject the material.

51. (New): The method of claim 47 further comprising the step of heating the material to a temperature between the solidus and liquidus temperatures of the material.

52. (New): The method of claim 47 further comprising the step of stirring the metal material to decrease particle size and increase roundness of said solid phase in the metal material.

III. Substitution of Formal Drawings

Replacement sheets for all of the drawings (Figures 1-10) are attached. The original drawings were submitted in color, with a petition for acceptance of those color drawings. Applicant has subsequently had the drawings re-drawn in a non-color, black and white, rendition of the same. No new matter has been added to the replacement drawings.